

ELY RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

in the

Administrative County of Cambridgeshire
and Isle of Ely

ANNUAL REPORT

of the

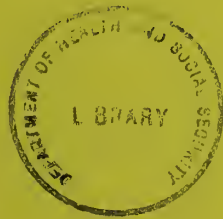
MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

Including the

Report of the Chief Public Health Inspector

for

1968



B. W. M. MACARTNEY

B. M. , B. Ch. , D. P. H. , D. C. H. , D(Obst.) R. C. D. G.

Medical Officer of Health

Ely Rural District Council

Shire Hall

Cambridge

Tel. No: Cambridge 58811

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PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Officers

Medical Officer of Health

M. E. HOCKEN, M. B. , Ch. B. , D. P. H.
(Acting to 31st August, 1968)

B. W. M. MACARTNEY, B. A. , B. M. , B. Ch. , D. P. H. , D. C. H.
D. (Obst.), R. C. O. G.
(From 1st September, 1968)

Chief Public Health Inspector:

D. J. GWYNN, M. A. P. H. I. , Cert. R. S. H. , and P. H. I. E. B.
Inspector of Meat and Other Foods

Additional Public Health Inspector

A. P. SHAW, M. A. P. H. I. , Dip. P. H. I. E. B.

Clerk/Typist

MRS. M. MAIN

LOCAL INFORMATION

Area	66, 082 acres
Number of Parishes	12
Rateable Value at 31. 3. 68	£325, 308
Penny Rate for 1967-68	£1, 335
Estimated Number of Inhabited Dwellings	4, 324
Estimated Mid-Year Population	14, 920

To the Chairman and Members of the
Ely Rural District Council

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present the Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health for the year 1968, prepared in accordance with Department of Health and Social Security's Circular 1/69.

I took up my appointment on 1st September, 1968, and I am sure that the Chairman and Members of the Council will consider it fitting that I should record, here, their thanks, together with my own, to Dr. M. E. Hocken who undertook the duties of the Medical Officer of Health during the interregnum caused by the decease of my predecessor.

Vital Statistics

The population of the District increased by 160 to 14,920. It is altogether unjustifiable to assume a static population but with an excess of births over deaths of 83 the figure does perhaps indicate a modest movement of population into the District.

The Birth Rate and Death Rate reflect the National figures, which in comparison with 1967 show a slight decline in the Birth Rate and slight increase in the Death Rate. As I have remarked before, where numbers are small, considerable variations in the Rates, from year to year, are to be expected, and it is for this reason that the fact, that no children died in the first year of life and only 2 babies were stillborn, reflects as an Infant Mortality Rate of nil and Perinatal Mortality of 8.6, compared with respective National Rates of 18.0 and 25.

Although the total number of deaths was 148, only 8 more than in 1967, deaths due to Malignant disease have increased by 13 (60%) and those due to Ischaemic Heart Disease by 12 (50%). The former trend is one that we must inevitably expect until the advance of medical science brings these conditions within the scope of medical treatment that is acceptable to the individual. No less than 20% of deaths due to malignant disease were caused by carcinoma of the bronchus, one of the indisputable causes of which is heavy cigarette smoking. So successful have been the Public Health Laws and Services that few conditions remain, in this Country, in which the cause immediately and dramatically precedes the effect. We are compelled by Law to plan for the future and provide for our old age pensions, but few people seem to care to take the steps that are open to them to ensure that they will be healthy enough to enjoy their retirement. Not only is heavy smoking

a cause of lung cancer but a potent cause of chronic bronchitis and a contributory cause of Ischaemic Heart Disease. This latter condition accounted for no less than 25% of all deaths in the District in 1968. I think it likely that we blame the stresses of life too much for the increase in Ischaemic Heart Disease, and so avoid looking as squarely as we should at our own responsibility for overeating, lack of physical exercise, and too heavy smoking which are also probably factors in the causation of this "disease of our time".

We pay much lip service to the concept of Health - someone wiser than I am said something about "deeds speaking louder"

Infectious Disease

The record of notified infectious diseases shows nothing remarkable. The year saw the introduction of Public Health (Infectious Disease) Regulation 1968 which brought the list of notifiable disease up to date, excluding some whose significance belongs to a by-gone age, and including tetanus, infective hepatitis and leptospirosis. The latter two are of particular interest as the clinical diagnosis is by no means easy and is often impossible without laboratory help, they are diseases however that are probably responsible for considerable morbidity. The Regulations also extend the powers of the Medical Officer of Health in the carrying out of his duty to prevent the spread of infectious disease, including food poisoning.

The Environment

By far the greatest part of the work of the Department is concerned with the control and improvement of the environment, so as to safeguard and promote the Public Health. This work is most adequately reported and commented upon by the Chief Public Health Inspector and I have singled out, at this point, only a few matters.

It is pleasing to note that in only one instance was it necessary to report, formally, to the Council a contravention of the Food Hygiene Regulation. I am sure that the shopkeeper concerned would not dream of licking his goods before wrapping them up for his customer, yet by smoking, while serving, this was precisely what he was doing, handling with the same fingers the cigarette in his mouth and his goods. The Public Health Inspectors cannot be everywhere all the time, and it is altogether necessary for the members of the public to insist that their food is handled in a hygienic manner.

All food businesses comply with Regulation 16, and with Regulation 19 where necessary, but Regulations governing the material environment are of little use in themselves. Safe food handling rests with the shopkeeper, his staff and his customers.

The Council pursues an active programme to provide the District with modern sewerage and I am indebted to the Engineer and Surveyor, Mr. Williams, for an extensive contribution to the Report. I particularly wish to draw to the attention of as wide a public as possible, the disastrous consequences that can follow if fuel oils and other biological poisons are allowed to enter the public sewers. The purification processes at the sewage treatment works can be seriously damaged and may take weeks to recover and during this period the effluent from the works can become not only a Public nuisance but a Health hazard.

It is particularly pleasing to see that the District now has an adequate and reliable supply of water of excellent quality, except that it is deficient in fluoride content, from the point of view of dental health.

I wish to record my thanks to Mr. Gwynn and Mr. Shaw for their unstinting devotion to the work of the Department and to the Chairman and Members of the Council for their interest and support.

I am, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

B. W. M. Macartney.

GENERAL PROVISIONS OF HEALTH SERVICES FOR THE AREA

Medical Officer of Health

Dr. M. E. Hocken acting until 31st August, 1968

Dr. B. W. M. Macartney from 1st September, 1968.

Under arrangements made by the Cambridgeshire and Isle of Ely County Council under Section 111 of the Local Government Act, 1933, the Medical Officer of Health to the Ely Urban District Council, Ely Rural District Council and Newmarket Rural District Council is combined with the appointment of Senior Medical Officer to the County Council by securing for the appointment of a full time Medical Officer from 1st September, 1968.

Public Health Inspectors

During the year Mr. Gwynn continued as Chief Public Health Inspector assisted by Mr. Shaw.

Laboratory Facilities

Chemical and bacteriological examinations of water are made by the Public Analyst at Cambridge. The Public Health Laboratory, Cambridge, undertake bacteriological and biological examinations of milk and bacteriological examinations of water samples, and all necessary examinations in cases of infectious diseases.

Hospitals

The District is served by hospitals of the East Anglian Regional Hospital Board. Cases of infectious disease requiring hospital treatment are sent to Cambridge City Isolation Hospital.

The R. A. F. Hospital, Ely, renders invaluable service to this Community.

Ambulance Service

Two ambulances are stationed at Ely, both being operated by Cambridgeshire and Isle of Ely County Council.

During 1968 the St. John Ambulance Brigade informed the County Council that because of the decreasing calls upon their ambulance, they intended to terminate the arrangement whereby the St. John Ambulance Brigade provided an ambulance for

the Littleport area. The County Council arranged for cover to be provided for the Littleport area from the Ely Ambulance Depot, and the driver of the St. John Ambulance Brigade vehicle accepted employment in the County Council's Ambulance Service.

Nursing Services

These services are provided by the County Council - details in Appendix 'A'.

THE PUBLIC HEALTH (INFECTIOUS DISEASE) REGULATIONS, 1953

As far as I know we have not taken any action with regard to the "Carriers" of food poisoning infections.

NATIONAL ASSISTANCE ACT 1948, SECTION 31 (as amended)

Meals on Wheels - Littleport

Supplied three times weekly. Secretary: Miss M. A. Peake, 18 Hoof Close, Littleport, organised by the Littleport District Nursing Association. During school holidays a Good Neighbour Service is organised for necessitous cases. Our thanks are due to all those persons who have given of their time to make this possible.

Section 47 and 50

As far as I am aware no action was required under either of these Sections.

Ely Rural District Council

VITAL STATISTICS FOR THE YEAR

(The mid-year home population is used for the
statistical calculations)

<u>Live Births</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
Legitimate	107	108	215
Illegitimate	8	8	16
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Totals	<u>115</u>	<u>116</u>	<u>231</u>

Birth rate per thousand estimated population	15.5
Birth rate corrected by comparability factor (1.07)	10.6
Birth rate per thousand population (England and Wales)	16.9

<u>Still Births</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
Legitimate	-	1	1
Illegitimate	1	-	1
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Totals	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>

Rate per thousand live and still births	9.0
Rate per thousand live and still births (England and Wales)	14.0

<u>Deaths</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
	80	68	148

Death rate per thousand estimated population	9.9
Death rate corrected by comparability factor (1.02)	10.1
Death rate per thousand population (England and Wales)	11.9

<u>Infant Mortality</u> (Death of infants under one year of age)	Nil
Infant Mortality rate (Infant deaths under one year per thousand live births)	Nil
Infant Mortality rate (England and Wales)	18.0
Neonatal Mortality rate (Infant deaths under four weeks per thousand live births)	Nil
Early Neonatal Mortality rate (Infant deaths under one week per thousand live births)	Nil
Perinatal Mortality rate (Still births and deaths under one week combined per thousand live and still births)	8.6

Legitimate Infant Mortality rate per thousand legitimate live births	Nil
Illegitimate Infant Mortality rate per thousand illegitimate live births	Nil
Illegitimate live births per cent of total live births	6.9%
Maternal deaths (Deaths ascribed to pregnancy, childbirth and abortion)	Nil
Deaths from Cancer (all ages)	34
Ischaemic Heart Disease	38

Table Classifying Deaths Under Age Groups

	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
Under 4 weeks	-	-	-
4 weeks and under 1 year	-	-	-
1 year and under 5	1	1	2
5 years and under 15	-	-	-
15 years and under 25	1	1	2
25 years and under 35	1	-	1
35 years and under 45	1	3	4
45 years and under 55	9	3	12
55 years and under 65	15	10	25
65 years and under 75	25	18	43
75 years and over	27	32	59
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Totals	80	68	148
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>

NOTIFICATION OF INFECTIOUS DISEASE IN AGE GROUPS, 1968

Age in Years	Scarlet Fever	Whooping Cough	Acute Poliomyelitis		Dysentery	Measles	Totals
			Paralytic	Non-Paralytic			
Under 1 year	-	-	-	-	-	3	3
1 -	1	-	-	-	-	18	19
2 -	-	-	-	-	-	13	13
3 -	-	1	-	-	1	18	20
4 -	-	1	-	-	1	9	11
5 - 9	8	3	-	-	5	35	51
10 - 14	3	-	-	-	3	1	7
15 - 24	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
25 and over	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Age Unknown	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Totals	12	5	-	-	10	98	125

Age in Years	Acute Pneumonia	Erysipelas	Food Poisoning	Puerperal Pyrexia	Para- typhoid	Ophthalmia Neonatorum	Totals
Under 5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
5 - 14	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
15 - 44	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
45 - 64	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
65 and over	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Age Unknown	1	1	1	-	-	-	3
Totals	2	2	1	-	-	-	5

NURSING SERVICES FOR ELY RURAL DISTRICTPROVIDED BY COUNTY COUNCILAnte-natal and Post-natal Clinics

Littleport weekly 2.00 to 4.00 p.m. held at Oddfellows Hall, Littleport,
attended by domiciliary Midwives
and general practitioner.

Other villages General practitioners hold ante-natal clinics in their surgeries.

Infant Welfare Clinics

Tuesdays	Littleport	Weekly	Oddfellows Hall, Littleport	2.30-4.30 p.m. Asst. M. O. attends 1st and 3rd Tuesdays.
	Haddenham	2nd and 4th	Church Hall	2.00-4.00 p.m. G. P. attends 4th Tuesday.
	Sutton	4th	Methodist Church Hall - Extra Clinic held quarterly	2.00-4.00 p.m. G. P. attends.
Wednesdays	Blackhorse Drove	4th	Community Centre	2.00-4.00 p.m. Asst. M. O.
	Lt. Downham	4th	Parish Hall	2.30-3.30 p.m. Asst. M. O. (3.45 p.m.)

Mothers' Clubs

In Haddenham and Sutton there are very successful Mothers' Clubs and Young Wives' Clubs organised by the Health Visitors.

Nursery Schools or Playgrounds

There is a pre-school playgroup held in the Vicarage, Haddenham, and also one held in the Parish Hall, Stretham.

District Nursing, Midwifery, Health Visiting and School Nursing

Staff changes have necessitated re-organisation of the services. The retirement of one district nurse/midwife/health visitor for Little Downham and the appointment of a full time health visitor for Sutton made it necessary to re-allocate the services as follows:-

Little Downham, Pymoor and area

There is a District Nurse/Midwife resident at Pymoor, linking with Littleport.

Sutton

There is a District Nurse/Midwife resident at Sutton, also covering the areas of Mepal, Wentworth and Witcham.

Haddenham

There is a District Nurse/Midwife/Health Visitor who is assisted by a part-time general nurse.

Health Visitor/School Nurse

There is a Health Visitor/School Nurse, based at Sutton, undertaking health visiting duties in Sutton and the surrounding districts, and also at Little Downham and Pymoor. The Health Visitor also attends the child health clinics in these districts.

Chiropody Service

This service is organised by voluntary committees in Sutton, Haddenham and Little Downham, the financial responsibility being that of the County Council.

Geriatric Visiting

Undertaken by a Health Visitor from Ely in close liaison with Chesterton Hospital and the Tower Hospital, Ely.

R E P O R T

of the

CHIEF PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR

D. J. Gwynn, M.A.P.H.I.,
Public Health Department,
11, Lynn Road,
ELY,
Cambs.

Tel: Ely 2894

1. CARAVAN SITES:

There were 27 licences in force for caravan sites during the year.

Of these 16 related to sites in single occupation; 9 related to sites having 3 or more caravans in permanent use, and the remaining 2 were for holiday sites having seasonal time limitations.

In all a total of 160 caravans were used for permanent habitation, and a further 34 for casual weekends and holiday making.

A number of sites were taken out of use, mostly on a voluntary basis, and this reflects the general trend of the past two or three years. There was virtually no demand for the establishment of new sites.

No problems were recorded and conditions were generally maintained at a satisfactory level.

The usual complaints against itinerant van dwellers were received, but not in significant numbers, and it was not necessary to institute any proceedings.

2. FOOD CONTROL:

(a) Food Premises

The established food business in the district are as follows:-

BAKERS AND CONFECTIONERS	5
BUTCHERS	13
CAFES	4
FRIED/WET FISH MERCHANTS	3
GROCERS/GENERAL PROVISIONS	42
GREENGROCERS	3
HONEY BLENDER	1
POULTRY SLAUGHTERHOUSES	2
SLAUGHTERHOUSES	1
SWEET & ICE CREAM SHOPS	6
LICENCED PREMISES	27
SCHOOL CANTEENS	6
CONVALESCENT HOME CANTEN	1
CHEESE FACTORY	1
	<hr/>
TOTAL	115
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2. FOOD CONTROL: (Contd.)

Number of premises	115
Number of premises complying with Regulation 16	115
Number of premises to which Regulation 19 applies	51
Number of premises complying with Regulation 19	51

(b) Food Hygiene

For the first time for several years a marked improvement in the number of visits made to food premises was achieved. Apart from regular inspections at the slaughterhouse, over 170 visits were made to all classes of food shops and catering establishments. In particular a special effort was made to inspect mobile food shops trading in the district. The policy of informal approaches where necessary and concentration on persuasion to achieve better food handling standards all round is now our first line of defence.

Only one contravention of Food Hygiene Regulations was formally reported to the Council. This was in respect of a shopkeeper who had been warned on several occasions about smoking while handling open food. A very severe warning was given that any further report of this nature would lead to prosecution, and this appears to have had the desired effect.

(c) Registered Premises

There were 70 premises registered for the storage and sale of ice cream. 47 were actually in use for that purpose.

10 premises were registered for the manufacture of sausages etc.

(d) Meat Inspection

100% inspection of all carcasses and offal was maintained at the one slaughterhouse in the district. Standard charges were levied for this service.

The following table gives details of inspections and condemnations.

2. FOOD CONTROL: (Contd.)(d) Meat Inspection (Contd.)

	Cattle excl. Cows	Cows	Calves	Sheep and Lambs	Pigs	Horses
Number killed	75	Nil	Nil	2	Nil	Nil
Number inspected	75	Nil	Nil	2	Nil	Nil
<u>Diseases other than Tuberculosis and Cysticerci</u>						
Whole carcasses condemned	Nil	-	-	-	-	-
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	4	-	-	-		-
Percentage of numbers inspected affected with disease	4.75	-	-	-	-	-
<u>Tuberculosis only</u>	Nil	-	-	-	-	-
<u>Cysticercosis only</u>						
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	Nil	-	-	-	-	-

(e) Milk

No sampling of milk distributed in this district was carried out, and no matters relating to this product were referred to the Department.

(f) Condemnation of Food

56 lbs. of carcase meat and offal were condemned at the slaughterhouse.

2. FOOD CONTROL: (Contd.)

In addition the following foodstuffs were surrendered as being unfit for human consumption:-

1 x 11 lb. tin COOKED HAM
 1 x 12 oz. tin PORK LUNCHEON MEAT
 1 x 11 lb. 10 oz. tin COOKED HAM

3. HOUSING:(a) Council Housing ProgrammePermanent Houses

No. of dwellings completed during 1968	39
No. of dwellings under construction at 31.12.68	35
No. of dwellings provided under the Housing Acts to 31.12.68	1,752
No. of pre-war dwellings improved by the provision of standard amenities during 1968	37
No. of pre-war dwellings under improvement at 31.12.68	5
No. of pre-war houses improved since introduction of the scheme in 1958	653

Temporary Houses

There is no temporary housing accommodation provided by the Council.

(b) Private Enterprise HousingPermanent Houses

No. of dwellings completed during 1968	115
No. of dwellings under construction at 31.12.68	117
No. of dwellings completed since April 1945	901

3. HOUSING: (Contd.)(c) Subsidised Agricultural Housing

No. of dwellings completed during 1968	Nil
No. of dwellings completed since April 1945	* 44
No. of dwellings completed since commencement of scheme in 1938	72

(* This figure is included in the 901 shown at (b) above).

(d) Improvement of Private DwellingsDiscretionary Grants

No. of dwellings improved or provided during 1968	9
Total of grants paid during 1968	£3,232. 0s. 0d.
No. of dwellings improved since 1949	257
Total of grants paid since 1949	£68,761. 0s. 0d.
Average grant per dwelling	£267. 0s. 0d.

Standard Grants

No. of dwellings improved during 1968	35
Total of grants paid during 1968	£7,623. 0s. 0d.
No. of dwellings improved since 1959	383
Total of grants paid since 1959	£56,509. 0s. 0d.
Average grant per dwelling	£147. 10s. 0d.

There has been no spectacular change in the general patterns of either new building work or improvements to existing dwellings. The replacement of older properties is not expected to occur overnight, but looked at in the long term it can be seen that much has already been achieved. Indeed the provision of new housing stock continues to outpace the wastage caused by the condemnation of unfit dwellings together with the voluntary clearance of others caused by economic circumstances or remote siting.

3. HOUSING: (Contd.)

(d) Improvement of Private Dwellings (Contd.)

Improvements to both Council and privately owned dwellings have been running almost parallel, and the Discretionary and Standard Grant schemes have increased in popularity. During 1968 private improvements were averaging almost one per week. Despite all fears to the contrary, no marked increase in the average cost per dwelling was experienced and there were no falling off of standards.

A White Paper "Old Houses into New Homes" carried proposals for increasing maximum amounts for grants and for making the conditions subject to which they are obtained more flexible. It has been widely anticipated that these proposals would be contained in a new Housing Act, but no changes had taken place at the end of the year.

(e) Slum Clearance

The comprehensive programme for slum clearance, first considered by the Council in 1965, was reviewed again. A further reduction in the number of properties scheduled for formal action was recorded and a total of 34 dwellings were removed from the list, these having been demolished or improved.

There are now very few families living in really sub-standard accommodation in the district. While the housing lists for most parishes still carry a considerable number of applicants, an analysis shows that only a very limited number can be linked with housing circumstances which should be dealt with under the Housing Acts.

4. OFFICES AND SHOPS:

Routine inspections were made at 40 registered premises involving 89 visits. This was an increase of 30 visits when compared to the previous year.

Since the Act came into operation, an average of one visit per registered premises per year has been achieved.

3 new registrations were made in respect of retail shops and 1 in respect of a fuel storage depot. 2 premises ceased to come within the scope of the Act, so at the end of the year there were 91 premises registered in all classes.

4. OFFICES AND SHOPS: (Contd.)

Standards have slowly improved, although there is still room for extra care so far as general cleanliness is involved. The 17 contraventions, all dealt with informally, again had a basis in poor conception of hygiene. Office and factory managements are still reluctant to employ adequate staff to carry out cleaning routines or to give available staff sufficient time to carry out those duties. Constant reminders are inevitable if we are to maintain satisfactory standards.

5. PETROLEUM:

There were 106 petroleum storage installations licenced at the beginning of the year. Total authorised storage was for 112,530 gallons, and licence revenue amounted to £68.

One petroleum filling station installed a self-service pump early in the year and no practical difficulties have been experienced in its operation of usage by the public.

Arising from applications made for the installation of self-service pumps in the district, and the lack of standard conditions to cover the licencing of such installations, the Clerk of the Council had suggested the possibility of holding a meeting at which representatives of local authorities in the County area could discuss all problems arising from administration of the Petroleum (Consolidation) Act 1928. This was met with enthusiastic support and the first meeting was convened by the Chief Fire Officer, being held at Ely Fire Station early in February. A great deal of useful discussion ensued and it was unanimously agreed to continue this local contact at six month intervals.

This Council became a member of the Association for Petroleum Acts Administration in April.

6. PUBLIC CONVENIENCES:

On set of public conveniences is provided and maintained by the Council at Littleport.

The facilities are available for 24 hours a day and are well placed for users of the A.10 trunk road. The experiment of removing coin operated locks was found to have no detrimental effect, apart from a minor loss of revenue, and there is no good reason for suggesting that payment be re-introduced.

7. REFUSE COLLECTION AND DISPOSAL:

(a) General

This particular duty in the overall pattern of environmental hygiene continues to take high priority.

While the householder and shopkeeper receives a steady service and the dustbins are emptied regularly no-one has cause to complain. If one uses this yardstick to measure the quality of the service, then a high standard exists in this district, as the number of complaints received each year is less than half-a-dozen.

Unfortunately, this situation leads to complacency and also, perhaps, a lack of understanding of the many problems we face in maintaining that service. Quite rightly no-one wishes to interfere with a soundly working system, especially when the alternatives are likely to prove expensive.

The fact that our kerbside collection system works, and works efficiently so far as cost is concerned, tends to deny the possibility of improvement. Modern methods must, however, be considered sooner or later with a view to giving a more hygienic collection service benefitting both the householder and the men who do the work.

It is not many years ago that this district had only a fortnightly collection and there was some opposition to the change over to a weekly service. I am sure that no one would now wish to return to those former days. The next step must be towards back door collection, coupled with the use of paper sacks to completely replace dustbins, or to act as bin-liners. Cost, of course, will be a major factor, but it is possible to phase a change of this type over two or three years.

No unusual problems were encountered during the year either on collection or disposal. The Bedford sideloader was finally 'pensioned off' and with a satisfactory stand-by vehicle to supplement rounds at holiday periods it was not found necessary to cancel any collections. Advantage was again taken to send drivers on short courses organised by vehicle and engine manufacturers.

(b) Civic Amenities Act

Part III of this Act required local authorities to provide places where residents could deposit refuse, other than business refuse, free of charge. It also made it an offence to abandon motor vehicles and other refuse on any land in the open air, and gave powers for authorities to remove and dispose of such items.

7. REFUSE COLLECTION AND DISPOSAL: (Contd.)

(b) Civic Amenities Act

A full report, with recommendations for local administration, was placed before the Council early in the year and adopted in all respects. As a result the main refuse tip at Stretham was opened to the public during normal working hours, and the stand-by tip at Littleport and Haddenham made available by arrangement with the office. An agreement was entered into with a local registered scrap dealer to collect abandoned motor vehicles at a nominal charge.

The provisions of the Act were given wide publicity by advertising in local newspapers. The tipping facilities have been extensively used as a result. It has been necessary to remove only two abandoned vehicles, and informal action in other cases has resulted in removal of vehicles or clearance of rubbish by the owners concerned.

Unfortunately we are likely to have with us for a long time the anti-social character who believes that every piece of open land, highway verge or dyke is his personal dumping ground. If this type of behaviour is not contained it is likely that our countryside will begin to resemble an uncontrolled refuse tip. It is to curb this type of action and avoid this possibility that the Act has been found necessary.

8. RODENT AND PEST CONTROL:

A great deal of anxiety was shown in many official quarters over the apparent increase in the rat population of the Eastern Counties. Extra vigilance in locating and estimating infestations might have been responsible. Alternatively, a winter period in which nature did not take its usual toll of rats coupled with a lack of extra control measures probably produced this phenomena. Either way I cannot say that our own problems were any more serious this year than in earlier periods.

All the known vulnerable locations were visited regularly by Mr. J. Barker, the rodent operator, in addition to his routine pursuit of complaints.

All sites owned by the local authority are now on permanent bait box treatment and the incidence of rats on refuse tips and at sewage works is being kept to an absolute minimum. Ready mixed baits have again been made available in considerable quantities at reasonable cost to ratepayers. This service is very much appreciated and the relatively low price helps to avoid the false economy of under-baiting with its inherent danger of producing resistant strains of rats.

8. RODENT AND PEST CONTROL: (Contd.)

Routine baitings were carried out in most sewers and minor infestations required follow-up treatments in some sections at Haddenham, Littleport and Sutton.

Considerable time was spent on fly control from the beginning of May through to the end of September. The villages of Stretham and Haddenham were badly affected. As both villages have refuse tips in close proximity the immediate reaction of the complaining public was to point an accusing finger at them to the exclusion of all possible sources of fly breeding. It took much effort to persuade householders that compost pits, manure heaps and incorrectly used dustbins (so close to their own back doors) provided equal opportunity for fly infestations to develop. Fully aware of our own obligations, a full scale insecticide spraying programme had been carried out on the refuse tips at the beginning of the season and was continued at intervals throughout the summer. The conclusion of the investigations was that several piggeries, close to housing estates, had created most of the problems, and suitable advice on prevention of further nuisance was given to each owner. The location of the refuse tips proved to be an unfortunate coincidence.

Throughout the investigation active help and advice was given by the Pest Control Division of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, Cambridge. I am pleased to record very sincere appreciation for their assistance, and particularly to Mr. John Conway of that Department.

The visits and treatments carried out during the year were as follows:-

(i) Rats and Mice

Complaints received:		222
Inspections:	Dwelling houses	315*
	Business premises	67*
Treatments of:	Dwelling houses	263*
	Business premises	9*
Surveys and treatments of:	Refuse tips	156
	Sewage plants	113
	Watercourses	65

8. RODENT AND PEST CONTROL: (Contd.)(ii) Other Pests

Complaints received:		63
Inspections:	Dwelling houses	85*
	Business premises	16*
Treatments of:	Dwelling houses	77*
	Business premises	2*
Surveys and treatments of:	Refuse tips	57
	Sewage plants	2

(* These figures include 'follow-up' visits).

9. SEWAGE DISPOSAL:(a) Parish Sewerage Schemes

Further good progress has been maintained during the year under review on the provision of public sewerage facilities in all parishes. The work of providing this most important amenity is reflected in the capital expenditure in the post-war period of over three-quarter million pounds. The Council now has 23 Pumping Stations with a dry weather flow of 364,100 gallons per day, a total of over £50,000 of mechanical equipment to be maintained in continuous working order.

Sewerage schemes in operation on the 1st January, 1968:-

LITTLEPORT
SUTTON
STRETHAM
MEPAL
WITCHAM
WITCHFORD
HADDENHAM
LITTLE DOWNHAM
COVENEY
WILBURTON
ALDRETH

9. SEWAGE DISPOSAL: (Contd.)(b) Sewage Samples (Contd.)

Sewerage schemes brought into use during 1968:-

LITTLE THETFORD
LITTLEPORT (Extensions to works).

Sewerage schemes in progress or proposed during 1968:-

PYMOOR:

Following the initial work during the latter part of 1967, details were submitted to the Ministry for consideration. There followed an informal site inspection by Ministry officials and the scheme was given approval in July. However, loan sanction was withheld because of the economic situation and there was local agitation on this decision as it was felt that the scheme was no less urgent than others already going forward. An offer from the local Member of Parliament, Sir Harry Legge-Bourke, to take the matter up with the Ministry was accepted. In the meantime, preparation of all documents continued in order to minimise delay at a later stage. It was with satisfaction that the Council received permission from the Ministry to proceed with the scheme at the end of the year.

WARDY HILL:

This small scheme had been in preparation during the previous year and tenders were considered in March. The contract was placed in May and work commenced in early June. Satisfactory progress was maintained to the end of the year.

BLACK HORSE DROVE:

Tenders for this scheme were received in September and the contract placed in October pending Ministry approval for loan sanction. This approval was given in November and practical work was expected to start early in the next year.

(b) Sewage Samples

The River Authority's inspectors took routine samples of effluent at the points of discharge from sewage works into various watercourses. In each case the samples were reported as being good and indicated that all works had settled down to satisfactory working conditions.

9. SEWAGE DISPOSAL: (Contd.)

(c) Particular problems (Contd.)

LITTLEPORT:

At the beginning of the year subsidence was noted in Silt Road, Littleport, and led to the discovery of a serious collapse of a section of sewer. It appeared that the complete section would require re-laying and emergency repairs were made pending detailed survey. Approval was sought and given for a television camera examination and this revealed collapsed sections caused by long periods of erosion of the surrounding silt.

It was recommended that 200 feet of sewer be lined with pre-joined P. V. C. tubes and an attempt was made to carry out this work. Although sheet steel piles were driven in to a considerable depth it was impossible to keep the excavations free from fluid silt and slurry, and so that particular scheme was defeated.

As a matter of urgency the Consulting Engineers were asked to prepare a scheme for repairs and improvements to include this particular section and to have regard to the future needs of the area incorporating possible extensions in the Ten Mile Bank and Sandhill locations. Their report was received in December and the various alternatives were discussed at some lengths. It would be an expensive project whichever alternative was adopted, but it was agreed to proceed with the most important first stage, and this was submitted to the Ministry for approval at the end of the year.

MEPAL:

During August it was found necessary to shut down the Mepal works for a complete day whilst the sedimentation tanks were pumped out and the whole works thoroughly cleansed. This work arose because of a large amount of oil having been discharged into the sewerage system.

The trouble was traced to the Village Hall where a supply pipe from the oil tank providing domestic fuel oil to a heating system had been severed. This unfortunate accident led the Council to give warning through the medium of the local press that even small quantities of diesel, domestic fuel oil and car or tractor oil could cause damage to sewage disposal works amounting to several hundreds of pounds, and that purification processes could be inhibited resulting in pollution of watercourses for a considerable period of time.

9. SEWAGE DISPOSAL: (Contd.)

(c) Particular problems (Contd.)

HADDENHAM:

A joint investigation involving the staff of both the Surveyor's and Public Health Departments was made into complaints of unpleasant smells in the High Street and Hop Row sections of the public sewer. The investigation continued for several weeks and took in a wide range of possible causes, none of which gave a single satisfactory answer. The most favourable theory was that disconnection of individual properties from the old sewer and consequent re-connection to the new sewer had emphasised minor faults in the individual house drains. A survey of the district indicated that several ventilation shafts were terminated below eaves level, often in spaces flanked by high buildings, and in certain atmospheric conditions accumulated foul gasses were not escaping into the upper air.

Approval was given for experimental works to be carried out mainly involving the extension of the ventilation pipes. The outcome of this work will not be known for some time.

(d) Cesspool emptying

As indicated in the previous year's report, it had been decided that the time was opportune for purchase of a cesspool emptying tanker to serve the areas of the district which were outside the scope of main sewers.

In June delivery was taken of a S.D./Bedford 1100 gallon tanker. The general policy covering emptying was reviewed, and it was decided to increase the number of free services to one per annum.

It had been anticipated that the vehicle would be used to improve the service to private householders, and also to be available at short notice for emergency work. It very soon became evident that the Council's decision to purchase the vehicle was a wise one. Because of the extremely high rainfall throughout the latter half of the year, many more orders were received for cesspool emptying than would normally be the case. In addition, the collapse of the sewer in Silt Road, Littleport, led to frequent blockages which were quickly alleviated by using the tanker and flushing operations were carried out at short notice. The frequency of emptying small disposal works serving out-lying Council estates was increased, and the de-sludging of sewer dykes was carried out with greater efficiency.

9. SEWAGE DISPOSAL: (Contd.)(d) Cesspool emptying

When the Pymoor sewerage scheme was deferred the Ministry suggested a better service for the emptying of cesspools in that district and this was catered for by the decision to increase the number of free services throughout the district generally. It was possible to give an assurance that the level of pollution of watercourses in Pymoor would be kept to an absolute minimum.

The problems of the disposal of the tanker contents remains, but the construction of three sludge lagoons on the completed refuse tip at Littleport contained most of the 250,000 gallons of cesspool contents collected during the six months of operation.

(I am grateful to Mr. R. J. Williams, the Council's Engineer and Surveyor, for the details contained in Sections (a), (b) and (c)).

10. WATER SUPPLY:

Water is supplied to the district by the Ely, Mildenhall and Newmarket Water Board.

The Ely Rural District Council was represented on the Board by Councillors R. N. Morris, J. P., C. B. Darby and C. H. Martin, M.A.

(a) Supply to Ely Rural District

For the first time for many years the Ely Rural District has an ~~in~~adequate and reliable supply of water. Until recently the total storage capacity could be emptied in a few hours, the Beck Row source could scarcely deliver the quantity of water the district required and in order to pump water into the area, very long lengths of mains passing through remote countryside were under a far greater pressure than they were ever designed to be.

The output of the Beck Row source has now been trebled, new trunk mains of a material which will not be corroded by the soil have been laid and two 100,000 gallon towers have been replaced by two of 500,000 and one of 600,000. The old iron pumping main is now used as a distribution main at a much lower working pressure and some of the weaker lengths are being replaced.

10. WATER SUPPLY: (Contd.)

(b) Quality of Supply

A chemical analysis of the water at each source is made once a year in the Autumn. The water is invariably reported as being of the highest purity though hard, except in the case of the greensand borehole where the water is very soft.

One sample of untreated water is collected from each separate borehole during the first fortnight of each month and examined bacteriologically at the Public Health Laboratory at Cambridge. These samples usually prove to be entirely satisfactory.

(c) Protection of Sources

The river authority, planning authorities and the building departments of the district councils are very helpful in passing to the Board information they receive about projects which might lead to pollution of the water supplies.

From time to time there has been a number of proposals to construct soakways to dispose of sewage or surface water or deposit offensive matter in pits or on land which, if they did not actually pollute existing supplies might risk future contamination or prejudice the development of future resources.

Unfortunately the powers to protect water supplies and resources possessed by the Board and other authorities are not very strong and the duties of the various bodies concerned are not as clearly defined as could be desired. The Board is not able to call readily upon the geological and legal advice necessary to deal with such matters. Nevertheless, discussion of the technical and legal problems involved by the various bodies concerned usually produces a solution.

The consequences of polluting underground water supplies are so severe that authorities should be armed with strong powers to control acts which might lead to such calamities.

(d) Medical Supervision

The health departments of the district councils in the area have continued to show a keen interest in the water supply and have readily co-operated with the Board's staff in matters relating to the safety of supplies. The district medical officers have also voluntarily undertaken the supervision of medical tests of employees to make sure that everyone who may come into contact with the water supply is free from water-borne disease.

(For the information and comments contained in this section, I am indebted to Mr. F. W. Sanders, Engineer to the Board).

11. WATERCOURSES AND SEWER DYKES:

The hoped for programme of routine cleansing of the 1,750 chains of dykes, for which the Council has responsibility, has still not materialised. With staff having to be continuously diverted to other duties I have had to be content with dealing with complaints as they arise, and it has been necessary, on occasion, to engage outside help to assist in cleansing work. The general effects of working "from behind" were clearly seen after the heavy rainfalls of August and September when localised flooding could be directly attributed to the inadequacy of many of the watercourses to carry off the surplus water.

Several methods of tackling the problem were investigated, including spraying the sides and heads of the dykes with a suitable herbicide, thus reducing the need for annual weed-cutting. Each method had its merits and also its snags, but the factor common to each was that any one of them would involve the purchase of machinery and equipment which would increase the cost of the existing service by a large amount.

To add to the difficulties already being experienced one of the Internal Drainage Boards, which had arranged an annual contract for the maintenance of 256 chains of dyke at Stretham, found it necessary to withdraw its services.

12. OTHER MATTERS:

Work of a routine nature was carried out in connection with the following subjects, but there are no comments relevant to the year under review:-

Animal Boarding Establishments
Clean Air Act
Game Dealers
Scrap Metal Dealers Act
Street Naming and Numbering
Water Safety.

13. GENERAL DISTRICT INSPECTION:HOUSING ACTS

Inspection of dwelling houses	439	
Improvement Grant inspections	102	
Improvement Grant enquiries	64	
Inspection of demolition works	12	
General surveys	<u>82</u>	699

13. GENERAL DISTRICT INSPECTION: (Contd.)PUBLIC HEALTH ACTS

Drainage	231	
Rodent and Pest control	64	
Insect Pests	68	
Offensive accumulations	18	
Refuse collection and disposal	251	
Water supply	1	
General	<u>20</u>	653

FOOD AND DRUGS ACT

Bakehouses	9	
Butchers	28	
General Food Shops	84	
Cafes, Canteens	18	
Fish Traders	2	
Hotel and Licenced Premises	6	
Mobile Food Shops	25	
Meat Inspection	<u>44</u>	216

CARAVAN SITES ACT

Site inspections		81
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OFFICES, SHOPS & RAILWAY PREMISES

Registration queries	1	
Inspections	<u>89</u>	90

INFECTIOUS DISEASES

Visits to private houses	32	
Visits to shops, schools, etc.	<u>14</u>	46

FACTORIES

Inspections		3
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PETROLEUM REGULATIONS

Licencing enquiries	13	
Pressure testing	<u>10</u>	23

13. GENERAL DISTRICT INSPECTION: (Contd.)OTHER VISITS

Street naming and numbering	27	
Animal Boarding Establishments	13	
Civic Amenities	34	
Sundry	<u>137</u>	<u>211</u>
TOTAL INSPECTIONS		<u>2,022</u>

14. PERSONAL COMMENTS:

To the Chairman and Members
of the
Ely Rural District Council

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The main activities of the public health inspection services in this district have been described in detail in the foregoing sections of this report. As can be seen from those items, 1968 produced the usual number of expected and unexpected problems which underline the many variations of duties involved in our particular contribution to the health and well-being of the community we serve.

On two occasions I drew attention to our staffing situation and indicated that any major changes in existing commitments, or added duties by legislation, would throw the department off balance. This can be emphasised by considering the numbers of general inspections carried out each year, which have now levelled off at what appears to be saturation point. The relevant figures are:-

1965	-	1,571	visits/inspections
1966	-	2,062	visits/inspections
1967	-	2,199	visits/inspections
1968	-	2,022	visits/inspections

(It was in 1965 that a staff change occurred which left the department short-staffed for a time, thus reducing the number of calls made).

These figures only indicate the practical application of work outside the confines of the office. No record is kept of the time spent on interviews, telephone communications, and routine paper-work in the office. There seems to be a never ending stream of requests for reports and statistical details from

14. PERSONAL COMMENTS: (Contd.)

various Ministries and other bodies. Many of these are required by law and cannot be ignored - all of them demand time on research and reference to our files and registers.

Much was said and written during the year in anticipation of the report of the Royal Commission on Local Government. Every professional and technical journal in the field of local government services speculated on the sweeping changes which might be brought about. Each one analysed the statements of evidence presented to the Commission and put their own interpretation forward. No-one was any the wiser at the end of the year and to add some confusion to the issue a Green Paper was published in the late summer to promote discussion on "The Administrative Structure of the Medical and Related Services in England and Wales". The position of the public health inspector in the future pattern cannot be assessed at this stage, but it will be to the detriment of the public if his somewhat unique service in local communities is either reduced or withdrawn in favour of the theory that other departments could absorb many of his duties and carry them out as effectively as they are today.

In keeping up-to-date with developments in subjects concerning public health technical publications and suitable text books continued to be added to the departments stock of references. Additionally, arrangements were made for attendance at a Noise Control Course held at St. Albans and at a Poultry Inspection Course at Bury St. Edmunds.

Legislation which had a bearing on some of our functions included:-

The Caravan Sites Act, 1968
 Health Services & Public Health Act, 1968
 Public Health (Infectious Diseases) Regulations, 1968
 The Clean Air Act, 1968
 New Model Codes on Petroleum Storage

On many occasions I have had people say that there is an excess of law telling them what they may and may not do and that we no longer live in a free state. This may appear to be true on the surface but one has to consider where freedom begins and ends. I have made reference in this report to some aspects of the Civic Amenities Act, which is an extension of previous law designed to keep both town and country free from unhealthy and dangerous refuse. In this respect no-one is free to discard his unwanted articles just where he fancies. This is but one instance where the freedom of the individual must be restricted for the

14. PERSONAL COMMENTS: (Contd.)

benefit of the community. Generally speaking, public health and allied legislation tends to operate in this way because in terms of the health of the community one selfish act may have wide repercussions. Particularly is this true in the personal aspects of food hygiene. One careless person can transmit, through unhygienic practices in handling food, disease which can affect many people in the space of a few hours. Can we afford a freedom which would allow any one of us to cause illness and even death in this way?

It now remains for me to acknowledge the many sources from which help has been received during this year. Many of the items included in this report would have been incomplete without the willingness of my fellow officers to provide some of the facts and figures and background information. It goes to show that we do not and could not work in isolated compartments.

In company with the other members of the staff I was pleased to welcome our new Medical Officer of Health, Dr. Macartney, when he took up his appointment in September.

Once again I would like to express my appreciation to the Chairman and Members of the Council for their careful consideration and deliberations on the monthly reports and for the help they have given, both collectively and individually, in the many aspects of public health work which have been placed before them.

Your obedient servant,

D. J. GWYNN,

Chief Public Health Inspector.

June, 1969

A P P E N D I XFACTORIES:

The following details give the prescribed particulars which are required by Section 153(1) of the Act.

1. Inspections for purposes of provisions as to health (including inspections made by the Public Health Inspectors).

Premises (1)	Number on Register (2)	Number of		
		Inspections (3)	Written Notices (4)	Occupiers Prosecuted (5)
(i) Factories in which Sections 1,2,3, 4 and 6 are to be enforced by local authorities	11	1	Nil	Nil
(ii) Factories not included in (i) in which Section 7 is enforced by local authorities	40	2	Nil	Nil
(iii) Other premises in which Section 7 is enforced by local authorities (excluding out-workers premises)	1	-	Nil	Nil
Totals	52	3	Nil	Nil

2. Cases in which DEFECTS were found:-

NIL

